

Message Text

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INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-13 ADP-00 PRS-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

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SS-15 USIA-12 SCA-01 AID-20 EB-11 SCSE-00 AGR-20

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA

INFO AMEMBASSY KAMPALA

AMEMBASSY KIGALI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

UNCLAS STATE 111159

E. O. 11652: N. A.

TAGS: PFOR PINS BY

SUBJECT: JACK ANDERSON COLUMN RE BURUNDI- PRESS GUIDANCE

1. AT NOON BRIEFING TODAY, DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ANSWERED
QUESTIONS ON THE JACK ANDERSON STORY, DRAWING ON THE
FOLLOWING GUIDANCE:

Q. WHAT HAPPENED IN BURUNDI?

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A. BEGINNING APRIL 29, 1972 AN UPRISING BY HUTU INSURGENTS RESULTED IN LARGE NUMBERS OF DEAD, WOUNDED AND HOMELESS IN SOUTHERN PORTION OF BURUNDI. MEMBERS OF RULING TUTSI ETHNIC GROUP WERE PRINCIPAL EARLY VICTIMS. TUTSI-LED GOVERNMENT BROUGHT INSURGENCY UNDER CONTROL IN FIRST TWO WEEKS. THERE FOLLOWED INDISCRIMINATE REPRISALS AGAINST HUTU MAJORITY OVER WIDESPREAD AREAS IN COUNTRY. THESE WENT ON THROUGHOUT SUMMER INTO SEPTEMBER. ESTIMATES VARY BUT NUMBERS OF HUTU KILLED PROBABLY EXCEEDED 100,000 OUT OF A TOTAL POPULATION OF ABOUT 4,500,000.

Q. WHAT WAS UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT POLICY WITH REGARD TO EVENTS IN BURUNDI BETWEEN APRIL AND SEPTEMBER, 1972? CAN IT BE CALLED "HANDS-OFF" POLICY WHICH DID NOT TAKE HUMANITARIAN CONSIDERATIONS INTO ACCOUNT?

A. ON CONTRARY. UNITED STATES DID MORE THAN ANY OTHER GOVERNMENT TO GIVE PRACTICAL HELP TO THE VICTIMS AND TO TRY TO TURN SITUATION AROUND. UNITED STATES WAS FIRST GOVERNMENT TO EXTEND RELIEF TO VICTIMS OF BURUNDI TRAGEDY. THIS RELIEF WAS DISTRIBUTED THROUGH VOLUNTARY AGENCIES ON NON-DISCRIMINATORY BASIS. TO DATE, HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE MADE AVAILABLE BY UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT FOR USE IN BURUNDI HAS AMOUNTED TO MORE THAN 300,000 DOLLARS. WE HAVE ALSO MADE AVAILABLE 325,000 DOLLARS TO VOLUNTARY AGENCIES TO ASSIST BURUNDI REFUGEES IN RWANDA, ZAIRE, AND TANZANIA.

THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT ALSO STIMULATED ACTION BY UNITED NATIONS. THESE UNITED NATIONS RELIEF MISSIONS TO BURUNDI HAD A CALMING EFFECT ON OVERALL SITUATION.

AS BACKGROUND TO USG INITIATIVES, IT SHOULD BE EMPHASIZED THAT AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS ARE HIGHLY SENSITIVE TO OUTSIDE INTERFERENCE IN PROBLEMS CONSIDERED INTERNAL TO AFRICA. APART FROM PURELY HUMANITARIAN ACTIONS, THEREFORE, WE FELT THE ONLY WAY TO PROCEED WAS TO WORK THROUGH INTERESTED AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS AND UN AGENCIES.

OUR FIRST OFFICIAL CONCERN WAS FOR WELFARE OF NEARLY 150 UNCLASSIFIED

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AMERICAN MISSIONARIES AND THEIR DEPENDENTS WHO WERE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT COUNTRY.

OUR SECOND CONCERN WAS TO ASSURE THAT OUR VOLUNTARY AGENCIES WERE PERMITTED TO DO WHAT THEY COULD TO ALLEVIATE SUFFERING OF VICTIMS IN BOTH ETHNIC GROUPS. BOTH OF THESE HUMANITARIAN OBJECTIVES WOULD HAVE BEEN ENDANGERED IF WE

HAD TAKEN ACTIONS WHICH BURUNDI GOVERNMENT CONSIDERED
INTERFERENCE.

IN THIS DELICATE DIPLOMATIC SITUATION, UNITED STATES JOIN-
ED OTHER DIPLOMATIC REPRESENTATIVES
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